
Federal Agency and Federal Library Reports

National Commission on Libraries and Information Science

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The National Commission on Libraries and Information Science (NCLIS) enjoyed an eventful year in 1993, administratively and programmatically. The new administration's priorities and initiatives included two major concerns already reflected in NCLIS programming: education and the information infrastructure. In addition to public forums and other activities, NCLIS arranged for sample surveys of school library media centers and public libraries to provide data on which to base policy advice in the education and information infrastructure programs.

Budget and Staffing

As required by the General Services Administration, the NCLIS staff moved the commission office in April 1993. The staff further developed its local area network of computers and applications, modernized telephone and mail operations and, courtesy of the U.S. Department of Education, was connected to Internet. NCLIS staff size remained at five full-time permanent employees, aided by the contractual staff operating the Library Statistics Program and part-time consultants. Peter R. Young continued as the executive director of NCLIS.

Congress appropriated \$889,000 for FY 1993 for NCLIS, a 7 percent increase over the previous year's appropriation of \$831,000. Funds covered operations and programs and enabled NCLIS to conduct meetings and hold open forums in cities across the United States. For example, the commissioners were able to see four major urban public libraries in Boston, Chicago, Philadelphia, and Washington, D.C., and to feed those firsthand experiences into their programs on education and the information infrastructure.

Commission Members

NCLIS Chairperson J. Michael Farrell and Commissioners Jerald Newman and Julia Wu ended their carry-over years on the commission in July 1993 (their initial terms ended July 1992 but they were eligible to serve an extra 12 months). James Lyons, Jr., resigned from the commission in April 1993 and Commissioners Wanda Forbes, Ben-chieh Liu, and Charles Reid began carry-over years in July 1993. Elinor Swaim, vice chairperson, presided over NCLIS affairs after July 19, 1993, when Mr. Farrell's final year ended. Other continuing members of the commission are Shirley Adamovich, Daniel Casey, Carol DiPrete, Norman Kelson, Kay Riddle, and Barbara Taylor. Winston Tabb represents the Librarian of Congress, a permanent NCLIS member.

On November 16 the President appointed Jeanne Hurley Simon of Illinois to the commission for a term ending July 19, 1997, replacing Mr. Farrell. The Senate confirmed her nomination on November 20 and she was appointed chairperson the same month. The Senate also received the following nominations: Martha Gould of Nevada, replacing Julia Wu; Frank Lucchino of Pennsylvania, replacing Charles Reid; Bobby Roberts of Arkansas, replacing Wanda Forbes; and Gary Sudduth of Minnesota, replacing Jerald Newman.

Support for Legislative and Executive Branches

Throughout the year the NCLIS commissioners and staff maintained contact with various officials and their staffs in the Congress and the administration on matters affecting library and information services nationally. With a new administration, there were many opportunities to acquaint or reacquaint officials with the status and needs of library and information services and with NCLIS's roles in determining and assessing the status and needs. NCLIS undertook program activities summarized below to give it the basis for advising the administration and the Congress.

The recommendations from the July 1991 White House Conference on Library and Information Services, planned and carried out under the commission's auspices, were another source of advice for the federal government. NCLIS commissioned two analyses of the recommendations from a public policy perspective to help NCLIS, the administration, and the Congress assess the pertinence of the conference recommendations for federal initiatives and legislation, such as the 1994/1995 reauthorization of the Library Services and Construction Act.

Library and Information Services in a Networked Environment

Following up on its July 1992 open forum and November 1992 report on library and information services' roles in the National Research and Education Network, in mid-1993 the commission named Syracuse University Professor Charles McClure as NCLIS Distinguished Researcher to examine the impacts of networking on libraries and information services. The scope of Dr. McClure's work for

the commission was later extended to include a survey and analysis of public libraries and Internet. Wisconsin Professor Douglas Zweizig and Dr. McClure, principal investigators for the project, planned a quick-response sample survey for January 1994. Dr. McClure will analyze survey findings on the extent of public library involvement with Internet to identify potential federal policies on the public library role in developing a national networked information infrastructure. NCLIS, Dr. McClure, and Dr. Zweizig were to report initial findings in March 1994 at the Public Library Association conference. NCLIS will publish the findings for general distribution as well.

In 1993 NCLIS also reviewed and responded to legislation, to the administration's initiatives, and to reports and other documents pertinent to libraries in a networked environment. NCLIS also participated in meetings such as those of the Digital Resources for Education and Training Work Group, coordinated by the Office of Science and Technology Policy. These and related activities were part of follow-up to a priority recommendation from the 1991 White House Conference on Library and Information Services on sharing information via a network "superhighway."

Libraries and Education

Much commission activity focused on another priority recommendation from the 1991 White House Conference, the Omnibus Children and Youth Literacy Initiative. From late 1992 through mid-1993 NCLIS arranged several meetings with representatives from the American Library Association and the Chief Officers of State Library Agencies to share information and plans for children's and youth services in libraries. While the meetings proceeded in 1993, so did action on pertinent legislation such as the Elementary and Secondary School Library Media Act, Goals 2000 bills on educational reform, and reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

NCLIS also conducted three open forums to hear views of interested parties across the country on the status, needs, and visions for services to children and youth in school library media centers and public libraries. Also aired were the possible federal roles and responsibilities in providing those services. The 1993 forums were held in May at the Boston Public Library, in September at the California State Library in Sacramento, and in December in Des Moines, coordinated by the Iowa State Library. The commission is publishing the proceedings of the forums, which also serve as the basis for NCLIS to advise Congress and the administration in formulating policy related to children and youth.

Another component of the commission's program on libraries and education was a cooperative project with the American Library Association's Office for Research and Statistics and the American Association of School Librarians to gather statistics from a sample of school library media centers. The most recent statistics were collected by the National Center for Education Statistics in 1985. Results of the next national survey are not expected until late 1995. The June–December 1993 NCLIS/ALA project is to provide current information for activities related to the legislation cited above.

Library Statistics

In addition to the special statistical projects mentioned above, the commission continued its collaboration with the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), which is part of the U.S. Department of Education, on a comprehensive and consistent national Library Statistics Program (LSP). The original component of the LSP is the Federal-State Cooperative System for public library data (FSCS). In March 1993 NCES electronically released the 1991 public library data for the 50 states and the District of Columbia. Public library data from U.S. territories will be added to the state statistics, beginning with the cycle for collecting 1992 data. [See also the following NCES report—*Ed.*]

The Library Statistics Program coordinated drafting of a survey instrument for the state library agencies, with the survey to take place in the 1993/1994 fiscal year. In September NCLIS and NCES hosted a Library Statistics Forum to assess present and next-decade changes in library and information services and the implications of these changes for the collection, analysis, and use of data relating to national library and information services.

The American Library Association in 1993 honored John Lorenz, LSP coordinator, with its annual Joseph W. Lippincott Award, presented for distinguished professional service in librarianship.

International Activities

J. Michael Farrell, NCLIS chairperson, and Commissioner Riddle attended the ninth session of the UNESCO Intergovernmental Council for the General Information Programme (PGI) in Paris in November 1992. The PGI conference's programs address information activities in member states and plan UNESCO's information program. Mr. Farrell attended the National Summit on Information Policy in Ottawa in December 1992 as an invited observer. He and NCLIS Executive Director Peter Young presented papers at the April 1993 International Conference on National Libraries: Toward the Twenty-first Century, in Taipei, Taiwan.

Commissioners Swaim, DiPrete, and Tabb attended the conference of the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) in Barcelona in August 1993. Ms. Swaim also attended the IFLA preconference seminar for school librarians from developing countries. The seminar was partially supported with State Department funds administered by the commission. NCLIS coordinated the distribution of \$175,000 to seven organizations in 1993, from the State Department's allocation for International Convention and Scientific Organization Contributions.

Awards

NCLIS began an awards program in 1987 to recognize outstanding initiatives by individuals other than librarians and by nonlibrary organizations to improve and promote library and information services. Recipients of 1993 awards were:

- Chrysler Learning Corporation, for a free educational video and booklet,

"Learn at Every Turn," and grants of \$1,000 each to 50 elementary and middle school libraries

- Ruth J. Colvin, founder and first president of Literacy Volunteers of America
- Della Jackson, founder of a library for African Americans in a community in western North Carolina
- KENS-TV, for support of San Antonio Public Library's fund-raising telethon
- Mott's USA, provider of up to \$500,000 to public libraries for books and other educational materials
- Jerry Neuman, creator, producer, and host of "Check It Out: The Radio Library Program," a daily two-minute public radio program
- The Screen Actors Guild Foundation, for Book PALS, Performing Artists for Literacy in Schools

Publications

Report to the Office of Science and Technology Policy on Library and Information Services' Roles in the National Research and Education Network. November 1992. Available from NCLIS.

Information 2000: Final Report of the White House Conference on Library and Information Services. November 1992. GPO, Stock No. 040-000-0580-3.

Pathways to Excellence: A Report on Improving Library and Information Services to Native American Peoples. January 1993. GPO, Stock No. 040-000-0587-1.

Annual Report of the U.S. National Commission on Libraries and Information Science, 1991-1992. January 1993. Available from NCLIS.

Open Forum on Children and Youth Services: Redefining the Federal Role for Libraries. Report on May 1993 forum in Boston. July 1993. Available from NCLIS.

Briefing and Open Forum on Children and Youth Services: Redefining the Federal Role for Libraries. Report on September 1993 forum in Sacramento. December 1993. Available from NCLIS.

Briefing and Open Forum on Children and Youth Services: Redefining the Federal Role for Libraries. Report on December 1993 forum in Des Moines. February 1994. Available from NCLIS.

Conclusion

Continuation of programs in education and the information infrastructure, involvement with legislative matters such as the reauthorization of the Library Services and Construction Act, preparing for the commission's twenty-fifth year in 1995, orientation and planning with new and veteran commissions, and working with a budget of \$904,000 are among the challenges and assets facing NCLIS in 1994.